

No. 14

FRENCH'S AMERICAN ACTING EDITION

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247-13  
V.D.

# Reforming a Husband

Musical Sketch  
For Lady and Gentleman

In One Act

By

FRANK DUMONT

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28-30 WEST 38TH STREET

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SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.  
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## Reforming a Husband.

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS.

LULU TOPNOTE . . . *an aspirant for the operatic stage.*  
CLARENCE TOPNOTE . . . *a young husband who needs  
reforming.*

---

### PROPERTIES.

Small and large toy snakes to use as described in sketch. Wash-stand, bowl and pitcher, with snake in pitcher, up stage, R. A snake ready to be pulled across stage by a string. Spider or grotesque bug in Clarence's smoking-jacket pocket. A common truck to be wheeled on and off by a man. The stage can be arranged with handsome furniture to suit the judgment of the players.

# Reforming a Husband.

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SCENE.—*A handsome chamber with centre doors. Few bars lively music at opening*

(*Enter LULU TOPNOTE, door C. Removes opera cloak and hat*)

LULU. I've searched every barroom, club room and restaurant in the neighborhood, but find no traces of my husband. Oh! this married life is just different from what I expected to find it. My husband still keeps up his old associations and never returns to his home until daylight. It's awful! (*begins to cry*) I'll return to my mother. No, I won't—she wants us to pay board. (*paces stage*) Oh! If I could only get even with him. I'll try the tricks I've prepared for him. I'll make him see a menagerie! If that doesn't cure him I'll send him to the Keely Institute.

(*CLARENCE TOPNOTE outside heard singing, "We won't go home until morning," and yelling, "Set 'em up again," "Good-morning, fellers," etc. Then a man wheels in a truck, C. D., on which is seated CLARENCE, coat on wrong, hat battered, collar torn, boots in his hand, torn umbrella, and in fact a wreck. Man dumps him C. and says, "There's your husband," and exits C. D. with truck. CLARENCE sits up and laughs*)

LULU. And to think that I am married to that!  
(*cries*)

CLARENCE. Now I'll shake the dice with you to see who buys the cigars.

LULU. Don't talk to me—don't talk to me! Drunk again!

CLARENCE. So am I! Where did you get *your* load?

LULU. Oh, that I should live to be married to a man like this!

CLARENCE. Woman! You're too sober for me.

*(She slaps his face)*

LULU. I'm going back to my mother.

CLARENCE. *(rises)* And so am I. I love my mother-in-law, and I'll board with her for nothing as long as I live.

LULU. Look at your condition. Look at your appearance. Where have you been?

CLARENCE. Where they sell them that deep *(bus.)* for five cents.

LULU. Clarence Topnote, you're a brute.

CLARENCE. You bet I'm a brute—that's what they all say!

LULU. Where have you been? Are you going to tell me? Do you hear me talking to you?

*(she shakes him ad lib. as she speaks)*

CLARENCE. Stop! You're *mixing the drinks inside* of me.

LULU. I can't stand this treatment. I won't stand it. I will *not* be treated his way.

CLARENCE. If it's your treat, I'll take a gin fizz this time.

LULU. Look at him, girls, ladies, look at him.

CLARENCE. Yes, look at the handsomest man that ever struck town. And to think I've thrown myself away on a woman that doesn't match my complexion! Where's my smoking jacket and my smoking cap and my smoking boots and my smoking stovepipe?

LULU. In the room where they belong!

CLARENCE. You think I can't see the door, don't you? I'll fool you. I can walk straight if I want to. You think I've been drinking. *(laughs)* That's where I'll fool you again. Madam, I've been hypnotized! Hypnotized by a barkeeper. I'm under the influence of

it now, and I can load you up with it. (*she laughs*)  
You doubt my veracity, do you? I'll show you.

(*bus. of hypnotism, eccentric moves ad lib.*)

LULU. (*aside*) I'll just humor the fool.

(*CLARENCE continues his eccentric movements*)

CLARENCE. Now I've got you dead! You can't leave the bar. I mean I've got you where I want you. You've got to obey me *or* mind what I say. Now—yawn! Cry! That comes easy—she's always crying. Laugh—give me the laugh. Dance—warm your feet on my back—no, I mean dance with your feet. That's it. Look out for the mouse! (*she screams and jumps upon a chair*) Come down! Sing—sing!

(*Music for LULU's song, and CLARENCE exits, door R.*  
*Song by LULU. At end CLARENCE returns with eccentric smoking jacket, cap and boots in hand*)

LULU. Now if you had a hand organ the picture would be complete.

CLARENCE. I don't see how you could climb up and get the pennies!

LULU. (*aside*) Now to see how my tricks will work, and if it will teach him a lesson.

CLARENCE. I feel splendid! Where have *you* been all night? (*puts hand in pocket and draws out a big spider. Holds it up as he shakes with fright*) Oh! Look at this—look at this! Daffy bugs—daffy bugs!

LULU. What's the matter? What ails you? I don't see anything to frighten any one.

CLARENCE. Why, of course you don't. I was just trying to scare you. (*laughs*) I didn't see a thing.

(*Slyly looks at spider and throws it away, R. I E. As his back is turned to LULU, who is L. corner, she pulls a snake across stage by a string. It passes under CLARENCE, who has a funny back fall and bus. ad lib. of terror, gazing after it*)

CLARENCE. Did you see it? Did you see it? There it goes!

LULU. See what? I don't see anything. What are you trying to do—frighten me?

CLARENCE. Do you mean to say you *didn't* see that big tapeworm that flew past me?

LULU. Are you crazy?

CLARENCE. No, I'm foolish! (*rises and laughs*) I can't scare you, can I? I came near making you believe I saw something. (*sits on chair to pull on a boot, speaking ad lib.*) You're the bravest woman I ever saw, and I'm a brave man. Holy Moses! What's in my boot? (*turns boot and spills a snake out of it*) Murder! I'm bit—I'm bit. Look at it! Rattlesnakes, garter-snakes and boy contractors!

(*Works himself into a fit, and LULU picks up the snake and throws it out. Then she laughs at him*)

LULU. You are certainly going crazy. There is nothing upon the floor—not a thing—and yet you caper around like a lunatic. I won't remain in this house any longer.

CLARENCE. Don't leave me—don't leave me. If you leave me here the menagerie will get me. Oh, but I'm thirsty!

(*Goes to pitcher to pour out water and a snake glides out of it to his extreme fright*)

LULU. Well, what is it now?

CLARENCE. There's a whole nest of them—snakes, snakes—take 'em away. (*work into a dramatic scene of delirium*) They are here, there, everywhere. I feel them clinging around my legs, arms and throat. Take 'em off, take 'em off.

(*He hops and skips around the room at conclusion of speech and falls c., with feet sticking up*)

LULU. Will I get you a gin fizz?

CLARENCE. (*rises*) No, no, I'm done drinking. No more liquor for me—until the barrooms open—but honest, I'll swear off.

LULU. Will you take me to the theatre?

CLARENCE. Theatre at five o'clock in the morning when the milk men are just coming around?

LULU. I don't care! I've got a right to be up as early as you have—or as late—and it's never too late for the opera.

CLARENCE. The opera? What do you know about the opera?

LULU. I'm opera crazy. I've been studying to go on the stage as a grand prima donna!

CLARENCE. And I've been studying for a great big prima doughnut. Let's have an opera of our own! I don't care what becomes of me now.

LULU. All right. If I'm good, I'll go on the stage.

CLARENCE. And I'll draw your salary like a dutiful husband and show you how to spend it.

(MUSIC—*Operatic selection*)

CURTAIN.

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An Original Farce in Three Acts

By GEORGE H. BROADHURST

---

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JONES, *who travels for a hymn-book house*  
EBENEZER GOODLY, *a professor of anatomy*  
ANTHONY GOODLY, D.D., *Bishop of Ballarat*  
RICHARD HEATHERLY, *engaged to Marjorie*  
THOMAS HOLDER, *a policeman*  
WILLIAM BIGBEE, *an inmate of the Sanitarium*  
HENRY FULLER, *superintendent of the Sanitarium*  
MRS. GOODLY, *Ebenezer's wife*  
CISSY, *Ebenezer's ward*  
MARJORIE, }  
MINERVA, } *Ebenezer's daughters*  
ALVINA STARLIGHT, *Mr. Goodly's sister*  
HELMA, *a servant*

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